



Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7860th meeting

Thursday, 12 January 2017, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Skoog	(Sweden)
<i>Members:</i>	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mrs. Gueguen Mohsen
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Okamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ilichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Coleman
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Letter dated 28 October 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/915)

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2016/1109)

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17-00835 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Letter dated 28 October 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/915)

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2016/1109)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/915, which contains the text of a letter dated 28 October 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, and document S/2016/1109, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): Today I would like to touch chiefly on the most salient aspects of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/1109) that the Council has before it and the main events that have occurred since it was issued.

First — with regard to the situation on the ground and since the announcement in September by the Government of the Sudan of its forces' victory in Jebel Marra, and therefore the end of the conflict in Darfur — in the last three months of 2016 the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) saw only two clashes between the Sudanese armed forces and the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid. Because of the losses it sustained during

the Government's offensive in the first half of 2016, the defection of some of its commanders and growing internal dissension, the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid is effectively maintaining a presence only in areas to the east and south-east of Sarrong. That, by the way, is the area where the two clashes I mentioned took place, on 19 November and 4 December. Also according to the Government, the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid has no more than about 300 fighters, who have been pushed back to various parts of the Jebel Marra mountain range. However, UNAMID has not been able to confirm that, because the Sudanese Government is still restricting our access.

Security arrangements were made and implemented by the Governors of the five states of Darfur. Unquestionably, there was a more sustained interaction in their dealings with the traditional chiefs and indigenous administrations. All of that contributed to a decline in intercommunal violence relative to that of the previous years. Nevertheless, tensions among the different communities persist. As everyone knows, they continue to be salient because of the very long-standing disputes tied to access to land, water and other resources, including, more recently, clandestine gold mines. All of that has been exacerbated by the proliferation of weapons and an environment of impunity, thereby contributing to intercommunal violence. Let us not forget that the seasonal migration is currently taking place and that there have been numerous clashes between herders and farmers in the southern part of Darfur, resulting in 71 deaths during the quarter under consideration and the theft of livestock in the more central and western parts of Darfur.

With regard to the civilian population, including the most vulnerable groups, such as displaced persons, those people continue to be exposed to an elevated risk of violence. Throughout the territory of Darfur, there have been serious violations of their human rights. For example, on 1 January, only a few days ago, members of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the police who were pursuing persons suspected of having been involved in the killing of a soldier did not hesitate to open fire inside camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nertiti, Habad East and Straha. At Straha there were no casualties, but at Habad East two displaced persons died, 43 others were wounded and four police officers were also injured. Subsequently, calm was restored, and the Deputy Governor of Central Darfur arrived at the scene. He promised to provide compensation and to pay

for medical care. All of that somewhat eased tensions, but the situation continues.

(spoke in English)

As of today, humanitarian actors have verified 97,000 displaced persons as a result of the fighting in Jebel Marra in 2016, while an additional 88,000 people have been reported but not verified as displaced because we lacked access to the relevant locations. Humanitarian work remains impeded by insecurity, delays and denials of access and travel requests. The past month, however, has seen some improvements with the completion of a joint assessment mission involving the agencies and Government in Gola in Central Darfur, and the regulations governing military access were eased by the Government's humanitarian aid commission.

In that environment, UNAMID has continued to provide physical protection through military and police patrols to prevent, deter and respond to threats of violence against civilians. They focused on large areas of displacement such as Tawila and Sortony in North Darfur. Following the attack on IDP camps in Nertiti, UNAMID immediately deployed a police verification patrol to the area and intensified military and police patrols, coupled with the engagement of the Government of Central Darfur and the IDP community to defuse tensions. The mission further contributed to the prevention and mitigation of intercommunal conflict through constant engagement with local communities within the framework of early-warning networks, assessment and confidence-building missions and targeted patrols, thereby facilitating dialogue between sedentary farmers, nomads and other communities and calling for the effective engagement of Government and community leaders to resolve disputes.

Allow me now to say a word about the political situation. There have been concerted efforts by UNAMID and the African Union High-level Implementation Panel. Despite the initiatives taken by other international actors, including the Presidents of Chad and Uganda, as well as the Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar, little tangible progress has been made in the Darfur peace process. The engine of the process and future political talks, which would be an agreement on the cessation of hostilities and humanitarian assistance, has remained stalled because of persistent disagreement between the parties on the modalities for the disclosure of armed movement locations in Darfur, the release of

prisoners and the role of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur in future negotiations.

All those actors engaged with the parties in order to bridge their differences. On 11 December 2016, the Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar, the Government of the Sudan, UNAMID and the United Nations Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan held consultations in Doha to review the status of the negotiations and outstanding issues. On 20 December, President Mbeki met with President Al-Bashir and other Government officials in Khartoum to discuss prospects for the resumption of the cessation of hostilities and the status of the National Dialogue. On 25 December, President Museveni of Uganda engaged with the leadership of the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi in Kampala and discussed with them their specific concerns on the remaining points of disagreement. Finally, on 31 December, President Al-Bashir announced a one-month extension of the Government's unilateral ceasefire in Darfur and the two Areas, which had expired at the end of the year, and doubled down on that with the reiteration of his call for opposition groups to join the National Dialogue. President Al-Bashir also met with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan in Khartoum on 4 January and expressed readiness to further extend the ceasefire and reiterated the Government's commitment to implement the road map agreement. As Council members are aware, the Abdul Wahid faction remains outside of the peace process and rejected any form of talks with the Government.

Following the conclusion of the National Dialogue in October 2016, the Government took steps to implement its recommendations. Accordingly, on 27 December, the National Assembly of the Sudan adopted several constitutional amendments that established a Government of National Reconciliation and the position of Prime Minister, both to be appointed by the President. They also included an increase in the number of seats in the Assembly, so that there can be greater representation and participation of opposition groups, and the separation of functions of the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice. But, in the absence of an agreement with the Government on the format and substance of the National Dialogue, major opposition groups have continued to boycott and criticize the process because they feel that it is insufficiently inclusive. There have been reports of arrests of opposition party members and political

activists, as well as the closure of media outlets that were critical of the Government's austerity measures aimed at preventing inflation. On the basis of that, the opposition has also argued that the current situation in the Sudan is not conducive to national reconciliation and a free and inclusive political process.

Turning to my final point, concerning relations with the Government of the Sudan, I am pleased to report on essentially unobstructed customs clearance of food shipments at Port Sudan, but not of contingent-owned equipment. However, progress has been made in the latter area. Progress has also been made in the granting of visa requests for some of the mission's personnel. I am hopeful that that spirit of cooperation will be maintained to address the mission's remaining operational challenges, including access and freedom of movement restrictions, the clearance of military and police equipment and delays and denials of visa requests for the Human Rights Section, because that does not contribute to carrying out the mandate.

As had been requested by the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, the two organizations held discussions with the Government on the implementation of the UNAMID benchmarks and on the exit strategy within the framework of the joint working group, which convened in Khartoum in October and November. These meetings were an opportunity to review the implementation status of the benchmarks, including the commendable progress made on some points in this respect, and to identify what remains pending. However, the joint working group was not able to reach consensus on specific modalities for the reconfiguration of the mission in the light of the changes that have occurred on the ground. The United Nations, in partnership, as ever, with the African Union, will continue to engage with the Government, including within the framework of the joint working group, to address issues related to the benchmarks, the objective being to adjust them as necessary, as well as issues related to the UNAMID exit strategy.

In sum, the current situation in Darfur is characterized by a significant decrease in armed conflict, particularly as a result of the Government's military successes against the armed movements and the efforts of state governments to curb intercommunal violence. Despite these improvements, however, civilians remain exposed to significant sources of insecurity: intercommunal conflict, criminality and the activities of armed militias. Because of the widespread

proliferation of weapons and the inadequacy of rule-of-law and justice institutions, this is not being mitigated.

Undoubtedly, long-term, comprehensive solutions remain necessary to create the conditions for the return or resettlement of the people who remain in displacement in the region — I would recall here that the figure is 2.6 million people — as well as for the resolution of the deep causes of conflict: access to land, water and other resources.

Now more than ever, we must call on all stakeholders in Darfur to continue working with UNAMID and the international community so that we can achieve these goals.

The President: I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the member of the Council who wishes to make a statement.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2016/1109). Uruguay wishes to stress that the report notes that no significant conflicts were reported in Darfur over the past three months and that compared with previous years, there were fewer intercommunal clashes. We wish also to acknowledge the steps taken by the Government of the Sudan to limit intercommunal tensions and fight crime.

Nevertheless, these encouraging elements have not been accompanied by any tangible progress in the Darfur peace process or in addressing the underlying causes of the conflict. In this regard, we encourage all the parties involved to renew as soon as possible direct talks in order to reach a formal agreement on a cessation of hostilities and humanitarian access, and move towards a political solution to the conflict.

I should like to highlight once again the important role being played by the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in an operational context that is not without problems. In terms of protecting civilians, UNAMID is focusing its activities mainly on protecting internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the prevention of intercommunal conflict. We take note of the efforts being made by UNAMID in this context, and we highlight the fact that, as stated in the report, the mission, in coordination with the United Nations country team, mapped the protection situation in 174 locations hosting IDPs,

including camps, gathering sites and communities. This exercise measured approximate number of IDPs, the main protection issues, response capacities and risk levels. We encourage the mission to continue its efforts to improve the effective protection of civilians through a comprehensive approach, as it has been doing, for instance, in terms of mediation in local conflicts and supporting reconciliation efforts and peace processes between various communities.

With regard to the operational situation, while there has been an improvement in the issuance of visas to UNAMID personnel and food ration shipments for its troops, I would reiterate that, in keeping with the obligations emanating from the status-of-forces agreement, the Government of the Sudan must take the steps necessary to eliminate all bureaucratic impediments and ensure that UNAMID enjoys conditions conducive to fully carrying out its mandate.

We would also highlight that the note dated 23 December 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan addressed to the Security Council referred to obstacles in connection with UNAMID's exit strategy.

In closing, allow me to express Uruguay's appreciation to all UNAMID personnel, the United Nations country team in the Sudan, and the humanitarian actors who continue to work tirelessly, often under difficult conditions, to achieve lasting peace in Darfur.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month and to wish you every success in your work. I should like also to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Spain, for his efficient stewardship of the work of the Council last month. Similarly, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the report (S/2016/1109) presented on his behalf today to the Security Council. In addition, I wish everyone a happy and successful 2017, in particular Mr. Ladsous, and I thank him for all of his efforts.

In previous statements before the Security Council and on other occasions, we have very often stressed the continuing improvement of the situation in Darfur, in particular from a security, political and humanitarian standpoint. The various reports of the joint working

group, as well as the visits and missions by United Nations representatives and special representatives of various countries, in addition to the report presented today, all have confirmed that progress has been made in Darfur. This is, of course, the result of the efforts made by the Sudanese Government, with the help of our international partners. The Sudanese armed forces, as well as other regular forces, have been able to take control of the entire territory of Darfur following the departure of the rebel forces, which are now outside of the Sudan.

All of this has made it possible to ensure security and to prevent tribal conflicts. The Council can see that in 2016, there was no significant tribal conflict that could have had an impact on security and stability in Darfur. For us, that is a great accomplishment and a great step forward, if we take account of the four most recent reports of the Secretary-General since 2015.

We also have the first report of 2016 (S/2016/1109), which indicates that tribal clashes were a serious threat to peace and security in Darfur, which is no longer the case. That is why the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has been able to justify its presence, thus far, in Darfur.

Today, however, what prevails in Darfur is security, stability and recovery, which have had a positive impact on the humanitarian situation as well. In 2016, we saw the return of 93,000 displaced persons and refugees who returned from Chad and who have re-established themselves in Darfur. Southern Darfur saw the return of 71,000 people; 65,000 returned to western Darfur; 32,000 to central Darfur and 21,600 to eastern Darfur. All of that is thanks to the provision of basic services to their villages. Those villages are part of the voluntary return that was facilitated by the League of Arab States and Qatar, as well as other countries, particularly China and Japan — countries that have also contributed to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Our Government also wants to put a plan in place to improve the conditions for voluntary return for our citizens.

The Sudanese Government is doing everything it can to establish a holistic and long-term peace across our national territories to move us away from war and fratricide. That is why we are pursuing dialogue and negotiations, in order to advance the peace process and put an end to the conflict. We have made great efforts to work with different factions, and were successful when the Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid joined

the National Dialogue, launched by our President. That initiative was integrated into the constitutional amendments that are currently under discussion. Thabo Mbeki, Chair of the African Union High Level Panel on Darfur, led the ongoing African mediation efforts, which seek better results with the other functions, with a view to achieving sustainable peace.

I reiterate the demand that we have already made of the Security Council — to bring pressure to bear on the more recalcitrant movements as a means to encourage them to continue negotiations in order to put an end to the suffering of our population in Darfur. I would also like to kindly request that the Council deal firmly with the case of the rebel Abdul Wahid Mohamed al-Nour, who has consistently rejected any initiative that promotes dialogue. He is called Mr. No in the Sudan, as he has rejected all of our proposals for dialogue. In the face of that, we must apply the Security Council's resolutions firmly, particularly paragraph 3 (c) of resolution 1581 (2005). It is very important that Abdul Wahid be added to the sanctions list. The African members of the Security Council should take that into account. We officially request that the Council take that matter in hand.

For two years now, the Secretary-General has responded positively to my country and to the demand that we made for a gradual disengagement strategy for UNAMID. We made that request in 2014, it is a logical and legitimate request, which is based on a number of different considerations.

First of all, the security situation and the humanitarian and political situation have improved drastically in Darfur. Everyone is aware of that. The reports of the Secretary-General are also evidence of that fact. That is why the presence of UNAMID, in its current form, does not seem logical. UNAMID also has a very significant budget, whereas the international community needs those resources to react to humanitarian crises and issues elsewhere in the world.

In addition, the withdrawal of UNAMID from certain sectors would still allow us to continue the peace process because those sectors no longer require a UNAMID presence. Currently there is an unequal situation in some zones of Darfur, but it covers an enormous territory. Peace is possible thanks to a series of factors that we see are seeing now. That is why there should be a progressive, flexible and quick withdrawal strategy.

We have carried out a number of cycles of negotiations and consultations with the United Nations and the African Union with the help of the joint working group. That group has met four times, most recently in November. There were also two evaluation visits made to different parts of Darfur. The group demonstrated that the situation has improved, thereby allowing the withdrawal of UNAMID from eastern Darfur, for example. Representatives of the United Nations, with whom we have carried out discussions, continue to reject the withdrawal of UNAMID from other sectors as well. That is why I would like to make some clarifications.

The Government of my country has reached the conclusion that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations does not take seriously the disengagement strategy for UNAMID. However, my Government has, at several turns, demanded that the strategy be taken into account and that dialogue and national consultation be considered. That is the request of the Sudanese Government. We are surprised to see that the international community continues to bear the financial and material burden for UNAMID when, in fact, there is no longer a need to do so. UNAMID is no longer needed in some sectors. It is as if UNAMID were an end in itself and not, in fact, a means of securing peace in Darfur.

The UNAMID budget is now a whopping \$1.3 billion annually. A small fraction of that would allow for certain cities in the area of Darfur to be supported, which, in turn, would help us make progress in our efforts for development. Different agencies have also visited various regions and sectors of Darfur — Jebel Marra in particular. We therefore stress the need to build a road that would allow us to end the armed conflict and the armed confrontations. It would be very useful if we could begin such a project. We must take all the necessary measures to secure disengagement in a gradual fashion, which would allow us to implement the objectives set up in February 2015. I would also like to stress that my Government will not accept the option whereby the withdrawal or the end of the work of the joint working group, which my Government is a part of and is very important to us, and we need to continue the implementation of a UNAMID withdrawal strategy.

We have sent two messages to the Secretary-General on that subject. One of them was sent by the Foreign Minister of my country. We have also contacted the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on that

issue. We agree with the Secretary-General's report, in that it stresses the need to resolve the deep-seated causes of conflict in Darfur and to continue to commit the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

To that end, my country continues its efforts to carry out holistic development in all sectors and across Darfur. As the Council knows, one of the main problems in Darfur is the scarcity of resources. Our efforts are therefore ongoing. We are trying to better connect the two cities of Al-Fashir and Khartoum. It is the first time that high-speed roads have been built and, for the first time in a long while, products from Jabel Marra are now being sold in Khartoum.

Lastly, I would also like to highlight our sincere willingness to achieve peace in Darfur and to continue

our cooperation with the United Nations, the African Union and all of our other partners so that we can attain our noble objectives and meet everyone's interests. I would like to reiterate my gratitude to UNAMID and to all troop- and police-contributing countries. I should also like to commend the efforts of the African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur, Mr. Martin Uhomoibhi. In one year, he has assisted us in making considerable headway and in re-establishing trust between the Sudan and UNAMID. Once again, I should like to stress that we are ready to continue dialogue with all of the members of the Council and to cooperate in a positive manner.

The meeting rose at 10 40 a m.